

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 099875 TOSEC 040134
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY EA:WHGLEYSTEN
APPROVED BY EA:RHOLBROOKE
P:DNEWSOM
H:DBENNET
PM:JKAHAN
EA/K:RGRICH
S/S:FWISNER

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P 190102Z APR 78 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 099875 TOSEC 040134

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, KS

SUBJECT: IMPENDING DECISION ON KOREAN GROUND FORCE WITH-
DRAWALS

1. YOU INDICATED AFTER YOUR MEETING WITH BROWN AND
BRZEZINSKI LAST WEEK ON KOREAN TROOP WITHDRAWALS THAT YOU
WOULD BE WILLING TO SEND A PERSONAL MESSAGE REINFORCING
THE POSITION YOU HAVE INSTRUCTED WARREN CHRISTOPHER AND
DICK HOLBROOKE TO TAKE WHEN BRZEZINSKI CONVENES THE MEET-
ING TO FORMULATE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PRESIDENT.
THIS MEETING IS NOW SCHEDULE FOR 2:00 PM WEDNESDAY,
APRIL 19 (8:00 PM LONDON TIME). ZABLOCKI IS HOLDING UP
THE HIRC MARKUP PENDING WORD ON ANY POSSIBLE CHANGE IN
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THE ADMINISTRATION POSITION; BUT HE WILL NOT DELAY PAST
THURSDAY. ACCORDINGLY, WOULD YOU AUTHORIZE WARREN
CHRISTOPHER, IN ADDITION TO REPRESENTING THE STATE
DEPARTMENT'S POSITION AS PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED, TO USE THE
FOLLOWING LANGUAGE AS NECESSARY AS A REPRESENTATION ON
YOUR OWN PERSONAL VIEW. (FYI: WE HAVE TENTATIVE
INDICATIONS FROM THE NSC THAT, SINCE YOUR MEETING WITH

ZBIG, HE HAS MOVED IN THE DIRECTION OF YOUR POSITION. END
FYI.)

2. BEGIN QUOTE:

"I STRONGLY SUPPORT DEFERRING WITHDRAWAL OF THE FIRST
COMBAT BRIGADE FOR 6-12 MONTHS. AS I TOLD HAROLD BROWN
AND ZBIG JUST BEFORE LEAVING WASHINGTON, I HAVE BEEN
FORCED TO THIS CONCLUSION BY THE WAY THE ISSUE HAS
EVOLVED IN CONGRESS. IF WE PROCEED WITH THE ORIGINAL
WITHDRAWAL SCHEDULE WITHOUT PRIOR CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL
OF THE WEAPONS TRANSFER AUTHORIZATION, I AM CONVINCED
WE WILL CONVEY A DANGEROUS SIGNAL TO THE NORTH KOREANS
AND SERIOUSLY UNDERMINE THE ADMINISTRATION'S CREDIBILITY
IN KOREA, JAPAN AND MOST OF EAST ASIA. A 6-12 MONTHS'
DELAY NEED NOT COMPROMISE OUR BASIC POSITION OR TIME
FRAME. MOREOVER, I THINK OUR WILLINGNESS TO LIFT THE
KOREAN BURDEN OFF THE BACK OF CONGRESS THIS YEAR WILL
STRIKE MOST CONGRESSMEN AS SENSIBLE AND CONSTRUCTIVE.
SPECIFICALLY, I THINK WE SHOULD GO TO THE CONGRESSIONAL
LEADERSHIP AND TELL THEM THAT WE ARE PREPARED IF THEY WISH
AND BELIEVE NECESSARY TO POSTPONE THE FIRST COMBAT
BRIGADE'S WITHDRAWAL FOR ABOUT SIX MONTHS SO THAT THE
CONGRESS CAN DEFER ACTION ON THE TRANSFER AUTHORIZATION
ISSUE THIS YEAR. CONCEIVABLY, THE LEADERSHIP WILL COME
BACK WITH A COMPROMISE PROPOSAL. IF THEY DO, WE CAN
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CONSIDER IT ON ITS MERITS. BUT THE KEY THING NOW IS TO
RELIEVE THE PRESSURE IN A WAY WHICH PRESERVES OUR
ABILITY TO COMPLETE THE GROUND FORCE WITHDRAWALS AS
EARLIER CONTEMPLATED, MAINTAINS OUR DEFENSE POSTURE,
AND EASES THE TREMENDOUS STRAINS WHICH KOREA HAS CAUSED
THIS CONGRESS. OF COURSE, THE WITHDRAWAL OF SOME 3,000
SUPPORT TROOPS AND THE HONEST JOHN BATTALION SHOULD
PROCEED AS EVIDENCE OF OUR COMMITMENT TO THE FUNDAMENTAL
POLICY."

END QUOTE. CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

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